

Virginia Latino Advisory Board
Friday, September 24, 2021
Patrick Henry Building

In attendance

Last Name	First Name	Present
Leiva	Manuel	X
Berry	Paul	X
Kline-Gabel	Karina	X
Gonzales	Melody	X
Barbosa	Cecilia	X
Romero	Carmen	X
Aranda	Edgar	
Brown	Diana	X
Luna-Jimenez	Max	X
Guzmán	C. Alexander	X
Espinoza	Juan	X
Pacheco	Aida	X
Patterson	Diana	X
Peña Rockhold	Gloria Maria	X
Rimola	Sergio	X
Sanchezconcha	Lyons	X
Soto	Rodrigo	X
Watkins	Walewska	X
Williams	Cecilia	X
Zelaya	Eduardo	X
DeSilva	Joshua	X

Approval of May Meeting Minutes

Last Name	First Name	Ay	Nay
Leiva	Manuel	X	
Berry	Paul		
Kline-Gabel	Karina	X	
Gonzales	Melody	X	
Barbosa	Cecilia	X	
Romero	Carmen	X	
Aranda	Edgar		
Brown	Diana	X	
Luna-Jimenez	Max	X	
Guzmán	C. Alexander	X	
Espinoza	Juan	X	
Pacheco	Aida	X	
Patterson	Diana	X	
Peña Rockhold	Gloria Maria	X	
Rimola	Sergio	X	
Sanchezconcha	Lyons	X	
Soto	Rodrigo	X	
Watkins	Walewska	X	
Williams	Cecilia	X	
Zelaya	Eduardo	X	
DeSilva	Joshua	X	
		19	0

- Administration staff present included Maribel Castañeda, Director of Appointments and Latino Outreach; Suzanne Holland, Board Administrator; and Justin Bell, Counsel to VLAB

1:02 p.m. Welcome and Call to Order – Karina Kline-Gabel, Vice Chair

Vice Chair Karina Kline-Gabel welcomed those in attendance and called the meeting to order.

1:05 p.m. Approval of May Meeting Minutes – Joshua DeSilva, Secretary

Carmen Romero motioned to approve the May minutes. Lyons Sancenzconcha seconded. The minutes passed with recommended changes. Votes are above.

Approval of September Meeting Agenda – Joshua DeSilva, Secretary

Lyons Sanchezconcha motioned to approve the September meeting agenda. Cecilia Barbosa seconded. The meeting agenda was approved.

Last Name	First Name	Ay	Nay
Leiva	Manuel	X	
Berry	Paul		
Kline-Gabel	Karina	X	
Gonzales	Melody	X	
Barbosa	Cecilia	X	
Romero	Carmen	X	
Aranda	Edgar		
Brown	Diana	X	
Luna-Jimenez	Max	X	
Guzmán	C. Alexander	X	
Espinoza	Juan	X	
Pacheco	Aida	X	
Patterson	Diana	X	
Peña Rockhold	Gloria Maria	X	
Rimola	Sergio	X	
Sanchezconcha	Lyons	X	
Soto	Rodrigo	X	
Watkins	Walewska	X	
Williams	Cecilia	X	
Zelaya	Eduardo	X	
DeSilva	Joshua	X	
		19	0

1:05 p.m. New Member Introduction – Karina Kline-Gabel, Vice Chair

Members of the Board introduced themselves and described their professional background.

1:12 p.m. Public Comment – Joshua DeSilva, Secretary

- **Roberto Quinones** Introduced himself and noted he is interested in observing VLAB meetings.
- **Jasmin Chavez, State Director for LULAC**—Shared that she has been State Director since 2020. Two key committees were started this year. One focuses on distributing information on sharing information about the COVID-19 vaccine. More than 500 Latinx community members have been connected with vaccinations. One Million Latinas Strong is another initiative that focuses on voter registration. Over 300 community members have been registered. The group will host a Hispanic Heritage Month reception and scholarship fundraiser in Washington, DC.

Virginia Latino Advisory Board
Friday, September 24, 2021
Patrick Henry Building
1:17 p.m. Chair's Report - Karina Kline-Gabel, Vice Chair

Vice Chair Karina-Kline Gabel shared the Chair's regret at not being able to attend the meeting. She also emphasized the importance of finalizing the VLAB report and agreeing on final language.

1:18 p.m. Administration Update: Transition – Kelly Thomasson, Secretary of the Commonwealth

Secretary Thomasson described the upcoming transition following the expiration of Governor Northam's term in January 2022. The Secretary noted that administrative process changes made in the last several years have been documented to ensure a smooth transition to the next administration.

Cecilia Williams asked Secretary Thomasson about the status of COVID-19 vaccinations among Latinos in Virginia. The Secretary described outreach efforts VDH is making. Health Committee Chair Cecilia Barbosa reported on an update from Sable K. Dyer of the Virginia Department of Health stating that 76 percent of Latinos who are currently eligible (those over age 18) in Virginia have received at least one dose of the vaccine, while just over 50 percent of the total population of Latinos (including children) have received at least one dose.

Aida Pacheco described her experience of a previous administration transition and asked what steps the Secretary of the Commonwealth's Office is doing to prevent common pitfalls. The Secretary emphasized the importance of having a Board administrator and of having best practices and standard operating procedures for Board business.

1:30 p.m. Board Administration Update - Suzanne Holland, Special Assistant for Advisory Board Administration

Suzanne Holland gave several administrative updates:

- Board email: VLAB@governor.virginia.gov
- Social media: VLAB Facebook – share the page! The Vice Chair clarified how to tag the Board in social media posts
- Next and final meeting of the Northam administration is December 10, 2021
- Committee meetings could be scheduled around the December 10 meeting. Suzanne mentioned these might not be necessary.
- New Medicaid dental benefit
- \$21 million investment in affordable and special needs housing and \$353 million in American Rescue Plan funding were made for small business recovery
- \$700 million was allocated funds for broadband development statewide
- A meeting with the Governor will take place on October 18. Suzanne will then facilitate distribution of the annual report to state agencies.

Cecilia Barbosa asked Ms. Holland if any tracking is being done to assess utilization of funds by Latinos statewide. Ms. Holland responded that agencies vary in how they track data around funds distribution. Aida Pacheco shared that when funds are allocated to localities, they are often required to do data tracking around funds distribution. She suggested that Dr. Underwood's office (Chief Diversity Officer) could be engaged in this process as well. Ms. Holland mentioned that the One Virginia Plan underscores the importance of data transparency in administering state programs.

1:45 p.m. Hispanic/Latino/Latinx Outreach Update - Maribel Castañeda, Director of Appointments and Director of Hispanic/Latino/Latinx Outreach

Maribel Castañeda gave updates on the following events and issues:

- Ms. Castañeda described an event on May 21 on imposter syndrome among Latinas
- June 14 Marymount Bill signing regarding tuition support for undocumented immigrants
- June 30 Immigrant Heritage Month panel
- July 10 *Defensores de la Cuenca* Latinx Conservation Month Park event
- July 17 Hispanic College Institute Hispanic Starts Workshop
- July 23 VALHEN Latinx Leadership Academy at James Madison University—worked with students on inner drive to pursue higher education
- September 14 Fairfax County Board of Supervisors proclamation event for Hispanic Heritage Month
- September 21 A Conversation with Hispanic/Latino/Latinx State Employees
- September 23 Hispanic and Latino Heritage Month Reception
- October 5 Hispanic and Latino Heritage Month Panel: Latinos Serving on State Boards and Commissions
- VLAB website contains updates with community webinar information
- Proclamations for Hispanic Heritage Month were issued in English and Spanish by the Governor
- Historical markers will be put up to commemorate Hispanic and Latino history in Virginia
- VLAB Facebook highlights: 863 likes and 1308 total followers; the Virginia Latino Leaders Council is currently highlighted for their new podcast
- September 23: Governor's Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Language Equity and Access Workgroup
- 2021 Governor's Fellows included 3 fellows of Latinx descent
- 18 Latino/Hispanic appointments in 2021, 133 Latinos appointed overall, and 12 Latinos have applied since 1/1/21

Gloria Pena-Rockhold asked about applicants for boards and commissions who are not appointed. Ms. Castañeda described the appointments process and emphasized that those not selected at a particular appointment period are kept on file.

Aida Pacheco thanked Ms. Castañeda for her work on the Governor's Fellows Program. She commended the inclusion of three Latinx fellows. She also mentioned that citizenship is currently a requirement for the Governor's Fellows Program and the Management Fellows Program and advocated that this requirement be removed.

2:10 p.m. Small Business Outreach Update – Kathryn Dolan, Director, Business Development and Outreach Services, Virginia Department of Small Business and Supplier Diversity

Director Dolan described the agency she leads. The agency began its work in 2015 after being authorized through legislation. More than 99 percent of Virginia businesses are considered small according to SBA criteria. The agency is strongly engaged in attempting to connect with small business to assess resource

Virginia Latino Advisory Board
Friday, September 24, 2021
Patrick Henry Building

needs, particularly among businesses led by people of color and women. VDSBSD provides advocacy, business development and outreach services, access to capital, and certification. SWaM certification is available for small, women, and minority owned businesses. Training and development programs offered by the agency help business to access resources and to grow revenue. Twelve new positions were recently added to the agency to bring the total workforce to around 52 full time employees. It is a Business One Stop is a new program that will support prospective business owners in starting new enterprises. Director Dolan asked Board members to share connections with the agency to build relationships with Latinx business owners. She also mentioned that the agency's website has a translation function. The Director's contact information is listed below:

Kathryn Dolan, Director

Kathryn.Dolan@sbsd@sbsd.virginia.gov

804-334-1748

2:27 p.m. SCHEV Update: Financial Aid for Undocumented Students – Fran Bradford, Deputy Secretary of Education and Lee Andes, Associate Director for Financial Aid, SCHEV

Deputy Secretary Bradford mentioned legislation granting need-based aid to undocumented immigrants. She described the challenges in creating a state level FAFSA system. The Deputy Secretary offered to attend the December VLAB meeting to further update the Board about progress implementing this program.

Associate Director Andes described progress in offering financial aid to community members who previously lacked a clear path to education. The tuition equity provision refers to any noncitizen who cannot complete the FAFSA form for financial aid. Two years of attendance at any Virginia high school and completion of high school in Virginia and Virginia state income taxes for at least two years are required for eligibility. The legal status of the parents will not be inquired about to determine eligibility. Asylum pending students also qualify for the program if they meet all other criteria.

Demonstrated financial need was explained to Board members. A state level form similar to the FAFSA is being created. Virginia DOE is consulting with other states to create this new form. The deadline for applications for the 2022-23 aid year is January 1, 2022. Some barriers the agency anticipates include reticence to engage with a government agency on the part of undocumented community members and language barriers. Estimates of eligible students are about 3,000 to 5,000 students. GMU and NOVA Community College are expected to represent about 65 percent of total enrollees.

Lyons Sanchezconcha asked questions about eligibility and types of higher education institutions that apply to the program.

Rodrigo Soto asked about documentation students might be able to use at various types of institutions as a result of completing the state form.

Melody Gonzalez asked about students who may not have filed taxes who are independent of their parents. Associate Director Andes described the difference between dependent and independent students. Melody also asked about marketing to the Latino community. The Associate Director shared

Virginia Latino Advisory Board
Friday, September 24, 2021
Patrick Henry Building

that a marketing budget has not existed at SCHEV since 2003. Private partners have been engaged in the past to offer marketing support. The state form will be available in both English and Spanish.

Diana Brown suggested that creation of a video webinar for distribution to schools across Virginia explaining how to work through the state form. Associate Director Andes described his work with the Virginia College Access Network and agreed that distribution of information to the community is important.

Diana Patterson asked if a GED is enough to qualify. Associate Director Andes confirmed that as long as the GED is completed in Virginia, students are eligible for the program.

Juan Espinoza suggested working with public institutions in Virginia to disseminate information to community members.

Carmen Romero mentioned housing programs as another community resource for information dissemination.

Gloria Pena Rockhold described a challenge regarding differentiating between high achieving students and those who have not been identified as likely to attend college. Associate Director Andes responded that the agency intends to target messaging to late middle and early high school students across achievement groups for distribution of information about the program.

Melody Gonzales asked about how the pandemic affected rates of application to FAFSA among Latino applicants. Associate Director Andes described challenges faced as a result of the pandemic and noted he did not have specific Latino applicant data available.

Lyons Sanchezconcha asked about a name for the state level form. Associate Director Andes noted that the name for the form is still under development.

Deputy Secretary Bradford mentioned the Governor's Tax Force on FAFSA completion and the hiring of a new position geared towards coordinating between SCHEV and the Department of Education.

2:52 p.m. VLAB Elections and Next Steps - Suzanne Holland, Special Assistant for Advisory Board Administration

Secretary Thomasson updated the board on several topics:

- Board appointments are currently being made, suggestions from board members are welcome
- Press release on clemency—Gov. Northam has issued more pardons than any previous governors
- AAPI Heritage Month events
- LGBTQ+ Advisory Board
- Board application is being revised in response to feedback from the transgender community

3:05 p.m. Break

The Chair asked about procedures for transition to a new administration.

3:15 p.m. Board Discussion: Finalize Annual Report – Paul Berry, Chair

Committee chairs or their designees detailed committee meetings and proposed changes to the report:

Housing – Rodrigo Soto

Rodrigo Soto highlighted the Housing Committee's recommendations. The Committee is thinking through recommendations for funding requests and tax code changes in next year's recommendations.

General Recommendations

Chair Paul Berry recommended adding a general recommendation that the Chief Diversity Officer's, Dr. Janice Underwood's, office be created as a permanent secretariat.

Aida Pacheco offered general recommendations including:

- Increase the level of funding to the Office of Workforce Engagement to deliver programs that will contribute to sustaining a diverse, highly functional and effective workforce
- Plan an annual summit and a six month follow up session with VLAB and the other constituency-specific Governor's Advisory Boards to establish a common agenda

Business and Workforce – Manuel Leiva

Manuel Leiva shared the Business Committee's proposed recommendations. He noted that opportunities for remote work among Latinos are limited and emphasized that Latinos face the challenge of being employed mostly in low skill, low pay positions. He detailed charts showing the instance of paid sick days, paid parental leave, and paid vacation among different racial groups. Farm workers are particular affected by not having these leave types and might not benefit from increases in the minimum wage due to exemptions.

Rodrigo Soto asked about including recommendations to remove both the farm worker and tipped workers from the exemptions to the minimum wage increase. Manuel Leiva described the Business Committee's work to interface with both types of employees. Rodrigo Soto shared his experiences working as a tipped worker in food service.

Melody Gonzalez recommended rephrasing Latino electricity burden to electricity burden on Latinos.

Cecilia Barbosa asked if a wage theft recommendation was removed. Chair Paul Berry mentioned this recommendation was removed due to lack of time to research and add in content, but encouraged the pursuit of this in the future.

Health – Cecilia Barbosa

Health Committee Chair Cecilia Barbosa detailed a few changes to the Health Committee's recommendations. She highlighted recommendations on diversifying the Latino healthcare workforce in Virginia. The prenatal care extension from 60 days to one year for undocumented women is an area of focus. A state health assessment is currently being completed by Virginia Department of Health. The Committee would like to have VDH provide feedback on Latino health to VLAB. This morning the committee was visited by Sable K. Dyer from Virginia Department of Health.

Education and Career Training – Diana Brown

Diana Brown mentioned editorial changes including making sure the Board roster and locations are up to date. Chair Brown highlighted the committee's recommendations for the 2021 annual report.

The recommendation for ranked choice voting in all statewide elections was discussed. Chair Paul Berry shared the underlying rationale for this recommendation including diversifying the pool of candidates and increasing outreach to communities of color. Aida Pacheco recommended including a definition of ranked choice voting and suggested possibly moving RCV to the Community Engagement Committee section or tying the recommendation more to education. Lyons Sanchezconcha asked why this was not included in the general recommendations. Karina Kline-Gabel mentioned that she prefers that this recommendation stay under the Education and Career Training Committee.

Civic Engagement & Social Justice Committee – Karina Kline-Gabel

Karina Kline-Gabel reviewed the addendum provided at the beginning of today's meeting. Joshua DeSilva asked about inclusion of cash bail reform in next year's report given the committee's new focus on criminal justice issues.

4:15 p.m. Approval of the Annual Report

Chair Paul Berry made a motion to approve the annual report as amended. C. Alexander Guzmán seconded the motion. The results of the recorded vote were as follows:

Last Name	First Name	Ay	Nay	Abstain
Leiva	Manuel	X		
Berry	Paul	X		
Kline-Gabel	Karina	X		
Gonzales	Melody	X		
Barbosa	Cecilia	X		
Romero	Carmen	X		
Aranda	Edgar			
Brown	Diana	X		
Luna-Jimenez	Max	X		
Guzmán	C. Alexander	X		
Espinoza	Juan	X		
Pacheco	Aida	X		
Patterson	Diana	X		
Peña Rockhold	Gloria Maria	X		
Rimola	Sergio	X		
Sanchezconcha	Lyons	X		
Soto	Rodrigo	X		
Watkins	Walewska	X		
Williams	Cecilia	X		
Zelaya	Eduardo	X		
DeSilva	Joshua	X		

Virginia Latino Advisory Board**Friday, September 24, 2021****Patrick Henry Building**

	20	0	0
--	----	---	---

4:19 p.m. Virginia Department of Elections: Voter Outreach – Christopher Piper, Commissioner, VA Department of Elections

Commissioner Piper presented a PowerPoint titled *How Virginia Protects Your Vote: Administering Accessible Elections in Virginia*. The Commissioner detailed election security measures the Commonwealth undertakes to ensure the security and reliability of Virginia elections. The difference between the Department of Elections and the State Board of Elections was explained. Commissioner Piper noted the JLARC study that found that DOE's list maintenance procedures are robust. Election night results being unofficial was also discussed. DOE's plans in terms of the *One Virginia Plan* were detailed. All materials are being translated into Spanish, Korean, and Vietnamese. Voter education and outreach is a strong focus of the Department given the \$1.8 million appropriation made by the General Assembly for this purpose.

Joshua DeSilva asked about how DOE works with the Virginia Redistricting Commission on ensuring that voters are sent the right ballots after district lines are adjusted. The Commissioner described voter placement audits the Department conducts following redistricting.

Aida Pacheco asked about including a question about whether an applicant to be an election official is Spanish speaking on the application form. Melody Gonzalez clarified that additional languages spoken are included on the form.

Melody Gonzalez suggested that translated forms be simplified so that multiple clicks are not needed to access information about election dates and times for Spanish dominant Virginians.

5:00 p.m. Closing Remarks, Announcements, and Adjournment - Paul Berry, Chair

The next full Board meeting is scheduled for Friday, December 10, 2021. Chair Paul Berry announced that he and Karina Kline-Gabel will be meeting with the Governor and the Cabinet next month to present the annual report. Lyons Sanchezconcha made a motion to adjourn. Cecilia Williams seconded the motion.

Last Name	First Name	Ay	Nay	Abstain
Leiva	Manuel	X		
Berry	Paul	X		
Kline-Gabel	Karina	X		
Gonzales	Melody	X		
Barbosa	Cecilia	X		
Romero	Carmen	X		
Aranda	Edgar			
Brown	Diana	X		
Luna-Jimenez	Max	X		
Guzmán	C. Alexander	X		
Espinoza	Juan	X		
Pacheco	Aida	X		
Patterson	Diana	X		

Virginia Latino Advisory Board

Friday, September 24, 2021

Patrick Henry Building

Peña Rockhold	Gloria Maria	X
Rimola	Sergio	X
Sanchezconcha	Lyons	X
Soto	Rodrigo	X
Watkins	Walewska	X
Williams	Cecilia	X
Zelaya	Eduardo	X
DeSilva	Joshua	X
		20 0 0

Meeting adjourned at 5:11 PM